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Route To:

Subject: Competitive EERAs - AQM & FAM Responsibilities

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director and Deputy Chiefs

The effort that began in FY 2006 to implement a consistent nationwide process for competitively soliciting preseason Emergency Equipment Rental Agreements (EERAs) has resulted in significant business process changes for both Acquisition Management (AQM) and Fire and Aviation (FAM). It has been a cooperative endeavor to ensure that the interests of both program areas have been considered, including applicable procurement laws and regulations, and specific fire operations needs.

A new methodology for awarding preseason EERAs and determining dispatch priority is being implemented this year. It is now a 2-step process. Step 1 entails awarding EERAs on a multiple award basis using competitive best value processes. Step 2 determines the dispatch priority weighing advantages for each piece of equipment (as defined by FAM) in relation to the quoted price. The equipment offering the overall best value is dispatched first.

This change carries with it responsibilities for both AQM and FAM. Responsibilities are based on clear lines of accountability where AQM assists the FAM program area in contracting for necessary resources, and FAM has the role of implementing and managing the processes that assign the resources to an incident.

Specific to this separation of responsibilities, AQM, through applicable regional and local contracting officers, will continue supporting all efforts with regard to solicitation, award and administration of EERAs to ensure the ideals of best value are adhered to. Additionally, AQM will continue to monitor, in an administrative support role, the implementation of the dispatch priority process.

FAM will be the manager of the dispatch priority process and other elements of business needs related to competitive EERAs and best value. This includes overseeing pre-use equipment inspections called for in the best value process, uploading awarded EERAs into appropriate databases that calculate the dispatch priority protocol being adopted nationwide, and ensuring performance evaluations are completed after each assignment.

In keeping with the cooperative effort that has led the Agency to a functional process for competitively soliciting EERAs and implements a cost effective approach for dispatch of resources, AQM and FAM will continue to work together to ensure that full implementation meets the best interests of both program areas. While there is clear separation of responsibilities, there is also a keen intent to work together so that FAM receives the best possible resources at the best possible prices, and enables FAM determine how those resources will be dispatched. To



this end, field units of AQM and FAM must continue to work closely and cooperate in accomplishing this objective.

Materials explaining the award and dispatch priority process changes in depth can be found online at <http://fswweb.wo.fs.fed.us/aqm/FESSAA/>. Please contact Cheryl Emch/WO/USDAFS@FSNOTES or Emmy Ibison/R1/USDAFS@FSNOTES if you have questions.

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